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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 718
By Givens

A RESOLUTION relative to Forest Sustainability Certification of
the Tennessee State Forest System.

WHEREAS, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) administers an internationally recognized process for officially recognizing and certifying management programs that incorporate policies and practices for achieving long-term forest resource sustainability on private, government, industrial, and community-owned forest lands; and

WHEREAS, the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA), through its Sustainable Forestry Board, administers a similar effort in the United States and Canada known as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) that promotes and verifies sustainable forestry practices on private and public forest lands; and

WHEREAS, both the FSC and SFI certification and verification procedures utilize highly credentialed, independent audit teams that comprehensively evaluate every aspect of a forest resource management program; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry requested that assessment audit teams be assembled for each of the FSC and SFI certification programs to

HJR0718

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evaluate the management policies and activities of Tennessee's State Forest System, comprising 14 State Forests and containing approximately 158,000 acres; and

WHEREAS, the audit teams evaluated resource management activities such as water quality protection; fire, insect, and disease protection; environmental conditions; timber management, including clearcutting practices and sustained yield; reforestation; road building and maintenance; local community relationships; aesthetics; recreation; management staff skills and competency; public participation; wildlife management, threatened and endangered species; historic and archaeological sites; and demonstration and outreach programs; and

WHEREAS, upon completion of the evaluation process, the audit teams concluded that Tennessee's State Forest System qualified for certification under the principles and standards of the Forest Stewardship Council; and

WHEREAS, upon completion of a preliminary assessment, Tennessee's State Forest System meets the necessary qualifications to proceed with a complete evaluation to verify that the System adheres to sustainable forestry practices under the criteria established by the SFI; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That this General Assembly commends the Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, for having qualified for certification under the FSC certification program, as well as meeting preliminary qualifications for proceeding with the SFI certification process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Tennessee General Assembly recognizes the accomplishments and continued commitment of the Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, to such standards of certification on the State Forest System, and that such efforts serve as a model for all Tennessee forest landowners in promoting the highest standards of forest resource management.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Commissioner of Agriculture and the Chair of the Tennessee Forestry Commission.